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Letter dated 20 January 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to write to you to provide information on the support offered by the United Nations to the League of Arab States (LAS) observer mission to the Syrian Arab Republic.

I received communications from the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Nabil Elaraby, in particular letters dated 19 December 2011 and 10 January 2012, in which he requested the United Nations to dispatch "as a matter of extreme urgency" a team of experts to assist LAS in fulfilling the mandate issued by the Council of Ministers of the League to develop and prepare the modalities and mechanisms to provide protection for the Syrian civilian population. In response, and after consultations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights replied to Dr. Elaraby on 11 January 2012 to confirm the readiness of her Office to deploy a team of human rights and protection experts to provide training on human rights monitoring for this purpose.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) regularly provides human rights and protection training upon request from Governments to law enforcement officials and other actors as part of its technical cooperation programme and has developed standard training modules to that end. Such assistance is contemplated by cooperation agreements between LAS and the United Nations Secretariat, and is specifically requested by the General Assembly in paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of resolution 65/126.

The formal communications to and from Dr. Elaraby were accompanied by working-level contacts between OHCHR and the League to determine the precise modalities for the training. OHCHR proposed, and LAS agreed, that a team of four trainers and experts would travel to Cairo on 16 January 2012 to provide a two-day training on human rights monitoring to the members of the observer mission. At the request of the League, it was envisaged that the training would focus on applicable principles and methodology for human rights monitoring, particularly with respect to visits to persons in detention centres, the release of political prisoners, the monitoring of demonstrations and cases of enforced or involuntary disappearances of individuals.

At the request of the League, the training mission was postponed on 15 January 2012, before its deployment, until further notice, pending a decision of the League on the future of the observer mission, to be taken at a meeting scheduled

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for 19 January 2012. OHCHR was subsequently informed that the meeting had been rescheduled for 22 January 2012.

OHCHR has informed LAS that its team of trainers and experts remains on standby to travel to Cairo to provide the training.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon